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DE RUCNDT #1226/01 1672117  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
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FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9361  
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 USUN NEW YORK 001226

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNSC](#) [SY](#) [LE](#)

SUBJECT: UNSC EXTENDS UNIIIC MANDATE AND ALLOWS BRAMMERTZ  
TO EXPAND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE INTO 14 NON-HARIRI  
INVESTIGATIONS

REF: A. STATE 97692

[1](#)B. STATE 96279

USUN NEW Y 00001226 001.2 OF 003

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary. The UN Security Council voted unanimously on June 16 to adopt UNSCR 1686 (text contained in ref A), which extends the mandate of the UN International Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIIC) until 15 June 2007 and "supports the Commission's intention" to extend further its technical assistance to the Government of Lebanon in its investigations of the other 14 terror attacks committed in Lebanon since October 2004. During an open briefing to the Council on June 15, UNIIIC head Serge Brammertz hewed closely to his most recent report to the UNSC in outlining progress in the investigation but refusing to name any names. Speaking after Brammertz, Lebanese MFA official Assaker thanked the Council for its support and praised Brammertz for his professionalism. Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Mekdad, also praising the "objectivity and professionalism" of UNIIIC's latest report, noted that Brammertz had characterized Syrian cooperation with the Commission as satisfactory and warned that "certain parties" were trying to exploit the UNIIIC's efforts to pressure Syria.

[1](#)2. (SBU) During closed consultations of the Council following the open briefing, member states were united in support of the Commission but split on the issues of Syrian cooperation and expanding technical assistance to the other 14 attacks. While suggesting it is more realistic to expect the investigation to conclude after one year rather than six months, Brammertz expressed hope the Commission would register "significant progress" by September 2006. He averred that 5-10 additional staff members would be sufficient to provide the Lebanese expanded technical assistance on the other 14 attacks. During a bilateral meeting with Ambassador Sanders, Brammertz rejected the idea that the tribunal could only be established once the Commission concludes its investigation and noted that the tribunal's prosecutor could continue the investigation.

Open Briefing Contains Few Surprises

[1](#)3. (U) During the open briefing to the Council, Brammertz delivered remarks that hewed closely to his recent report and contained no surprises. He outlined progress on the forensics investigation into the Hariri assassination and concluded that the attack had been a targeted assassination. Brammertz reiterated that Syrian cooperation with the UNIIIC had been "generally satisfactory." While arguing there were

links in intent and modus operandi between the Hariri attack and the other 14 attacks in Lebanon since October 2004, Brammertz admitted that he could not yet point to any evidentiary links. Warning that "no progress" would be made in these inquiries without increased international support, he argued that the Commission should adopt "a more proactive role" in extending technical assistance to the GOL. Brammertz acknowledged the high expectations for progress in the UNIIIC investigation and promised that the Commission would focus in the months ahead on identifying the perpetrators behind the Hariri attack.

¶4. (U) Speaking after Brammertz, Lebanese MFA Secretary-General Boutros Assaker thanked the UNSC for its

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support in the Hariri investigation and praised the Commissioner for his professionalism and seriousness. Assaker expressed hope that UNIIIC assistance would enable the GOL to determine responsibility for the other 14 attacks as well. He "noted with interest" how the UNIIIC report had characterized cooperation from "relevant parties" named in the report, and "encouraged the continuity of this cooperation." Assaker praised current consultations between the GOL and the UN Secretariat to draft an agreement establishing the tribunal, which he said all Lebanese "await with concern and anticipation."

¶5. (U) Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Faysal Mekdad, who asked to address the Council after learning that Lebanon had made the same request, praised the "objectivity and professionalism" of the UNIIIC report. He observed that the report deemed Syrian cooperation with the Commission satisfactory, and he pledged that Syria would respond to all future requests made by the UNIIIC. Mekdad warned that "certain parties, inside or outside the region," hoped to exploit the Commission's work by jumping to a priori conclusions in an effort to pressure the SARG. He argued that the UNSCRs establishing the Commission require cooperation from all member states -- not just Syria -- and

USUN NEW Y 00001226 002.2 OF 003

he opined that UNIIIC should continue to operate in a confidential manner and take the time it needs to bring the

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investigation to the next stage.

Member States All Support UNIIIC  
But Split on Expanded Mandate and Syria

¶6. (SBU) During closed consultations, all UNSC member expressed support for an extension of UNIIIC's mandate. Most delegations characterized Brammertz's report and briefing to the Council as professional and detailed. Qatar expressed hope that the Commission's next report would contain its conclusions about responsibility for Hariri's assassination. Russia argued that the tribunal established to try those responsible for this crime should be based on both Lebanese and international law, while Peru averred that the court should have as much Lebanese participation as possible. Japan asked whether the Commission would be able to conclude its investigation within one year, and also asked how the Commission's functions would change once the tribunal is established.

¶7. (SBU) Council members offered divergent assessments of Syrian cooperation with the UNIIIC. Ambassador Sanders, drawing from ref B, demanded that Syria provide comprehensive responses to the Commission's questions in all instances -- not just some. The UK, France, and Denmark joined the U.S. in insisting that Syria "fully and unconditionally" cooperate with the Commission. Surprisingly, China, while noting that Syria's cooperation had become "more satisfactory," encouraged the SARG to "fully cooperate" with the Commission.

Russia, Qatar, and Greece all praised Syrian cooperation with the UNIIIC as "positive," while Japan expressed hope that Syria's cooperation would continue.

¶18. (SBU) Similar divisions were apparent in the Council on the issue of whether the UNIIIC should expand its technical assistance to the GOL in its investigations into the other 14 terror attacks committed in Lebanon since October 2004. France and Denmark joined the U.S. in supporting the Commission's intent to provide expanded technical assistance.

While Qatar and Argentina also expressed support for continued technical assistance, they questioned how much additional aid the Commission planned to grant the GOL. Russia and Japan argued that the priority of the UNIIIC's efforts should be the Hariri assassination, and they both said they expected Lebanon to strengthen its own capacity largely on its own. Even the UK observed that UNSCR 1644's authorization for technical assistance still applied and that resources should mainly go towards the Hariri investigation.

Brammertz Slightly More  
Forthcoming in Private  
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¶19. (SBU) After member states delivered their interventions during closed consultations, Brammertz offered a bit more detail on his timeline for progress in the investigation. While suggesting it is more realistic to expect the investigation to conclude after one year than six months, he hoped the Commission would register "significant progress" by September -- including completion of forensic analysis and substantial progress in analyzing the communications records it recently received. On the issue of Syrian cooperation, Brammertz suggested his efforts to send the Syrians "concrete requests" with "realistic timetables" had helped elicit maximum cooperation. He also mentioned that he holds technical meetings with them every six to eight weeks to ensure the two sides are communicating well.

¶10. (SBU) On the issue of providing technical assistance for the other 14 cases, Brammertz deflected concerns about the extent of this expanded support by suggesting that "we are not speaking of large numbers" of additional staff. He suggested 5-10 additional staff members would be sufficient, with 2-3 focused on forensics, 2-3 on analysis, and 3-4 on investigations. Brammertz appealed to the Council to interpret "technical assistance" in the widest possible way, to include the Commission conducting interviews if necessary and extending its forensics capabilities to the GOL for evidence collected in the other 14 investigations. During a bilateral meeting with Ambassador Sanders on June 13, Brammertz said a formal expansion of UNIIIC's mandate -- if it becomes necessary -- would have to await SYG Annan's

USUN NEW Y 00001226 003.2 OF 003

report on that issue per UNSCR 1644. He estimated that report might be ready by September 2006.

¶11. (SBU) Brammertz declined to offer many more details on the transition from the the UNIIIC to the tribunal during the closed Council consultations -- except to say that no final decisions had been made and the SYG would report on UN-GOL negotiations -- but he was more forthcoming during the bilateral meeting with Ambassador Sanders. During the bilateral meeting, he rejected the notion that the tribunal could only be established once the Commission has completed its investigation. Noting that the UNIIIC has organized its work in a way that will enable a smooth handover to a prosecutor's office, Brammertz suggested the prosecutor could continue the investigation if the Commission had not yet reached final conclusions. If the UNIIIC's mandate is eventually expanded to include the other 14 attacks, but the Commission concludes its work before those investigations are complete, Brammertz suggested the prosecutor could have the

discretion to continue those investigations or refer them  
back to the GOL.  
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